



The Rwandan Experience

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Project Category: Study Aboard

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Major: Nutrition Science

Project Description: My project includes studying abroad in Rwanda during the May semester of 2019. The Genocide and Its Aftermath in Rwanda education abroad program takes place in various locations in Kigali. The sites visited will all me to study the origin of the genocide and understand the current state of Rwanda.

Why Rwanda:

In high school I had the opportunity to meet survivors of the Rwanda genocide and read the book, *Left To Tell* by Immaculee Ilibagiza, one of the genocide survivors. As a human being and student, the survivors' resilience amazed me. How does a culture turn against one another and commit such hateful crimes? After genocide how does one re-establish trust and care for the community left? In addition to the study abroad program expanding my horizons for my future career, this opportunity will allow for a more in-depth understanding of colonialism's affects on African countries.



Transformational Experience:

The experience of staying with a host family taught me about community, resilience and forgiveness. My host mother and her siblings were survivors of the 1994 Rwanda Genocide against the Tutsi. While with her family I had the opportunity to hear firsthand accounts of the events and partake in a walk to remember. The community's ability to forgive and rebuild was something I had never seen. Reconciliation is not perfect but progress in the right direction.



What I Learned:

During, the genocide word of mouth helped facilitate a lot of the killing. People would get identified as Tutsi on the radio and groups would hunt for them. Killing was a result of propaganda, fear and loyalty to the government.



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Second-year Transformational Experience Program